

# SPICE ISLANDS

8 DAYS 7 NIGHT ITINERARY



The Banda Islands are a small cluster of about ten islands in the Banda Sea about 2,000km east of Java at the tail end of the Indonesian archipelago. These form part of the Maluku Province and the main city/island is called Ambon which has a small airport serving as the main port of entry and the jumping off point for adventures here.

This region is also referred to as The Spice Islands because, although long forgotten by the march of history, these islands were once the epicentre of the worlds focus as European colonial powers vied to carve up the world between them. The attraction was the precious commodities of nutmeg, cloves and mace that grow profusely here.

Literally jam-packed with opportunities for exploration this sparsely populated location has azure oceans bursting with marine life, deserted beaches, friendly locals and the charming remnants of beautiful colonial architecture. This location is exquisitely undiscovered by the western world and the travellers who make it here are rewarded tenfold for their efforts.

# DAY 1

## AMBON

Fly to Ambon where our staff meet you at the airport with oshibori and refreshing mineral water. Our Cruise Director welcomes everyone aboard and gives a safety briefing while the chef prepares a delicious meal.



We set sail on Prana, looking out for dolphins and whales as we go. As evening falls on your first day dine on deck and then retire to the cinema under the stars or have a massage in the spa.



# DAY 2

## RUN ISLAND

Wake up on your first morning with Run Island framed by the majestic sunrise. Enjoy an early morning yoga session and then have a delicious breakfast in the salon.

Spend the day at Run Island and enjoying magnificent views and snorkelling or diving through spectacular coral walls with some of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet. The remoteness of the islands and the low levels of human population have meant less fishing pressures and a vibrant, natural and healthy reef system.

The Dutch were so keen to control the rare nutmeg plantations, they gave the British the island of Manhattan in exchange for Run Island in 1677. Run Island keeps this colonial feel and has a lovely traditional village inhabited by friendly locals which are well worth a visit.



# DAY 3

## THE FORTS

The central islands form a picture-perfect crescent around the volcano, Gunung Api and were at the heart of the Dutch and British interest. These consist of Pulau Neira and Pulau Banda Besar or the great nutmeg island.



Today explore the island of Banda Besar with its impressive array of colonial architecture and rich historical background. Visit Fort Belgica, the historic church and the Governors House. After this, take trishaws to Fort Nassau and the local market where you can buy freshly dried Banda nutmegs, real cinnamon, handmade nutmeg, plucking baskets and local delicacies made from the spices grown on the island.

Join Prana again and set sail to Cats Eye Beach which is very close by. Soak up the tropical vibes and enjoy a beach BBQ with cool cocktails around a roaring bonfire. Return to Prana for a late night cocktail in the bar before heading to bed in your luxurious suite.

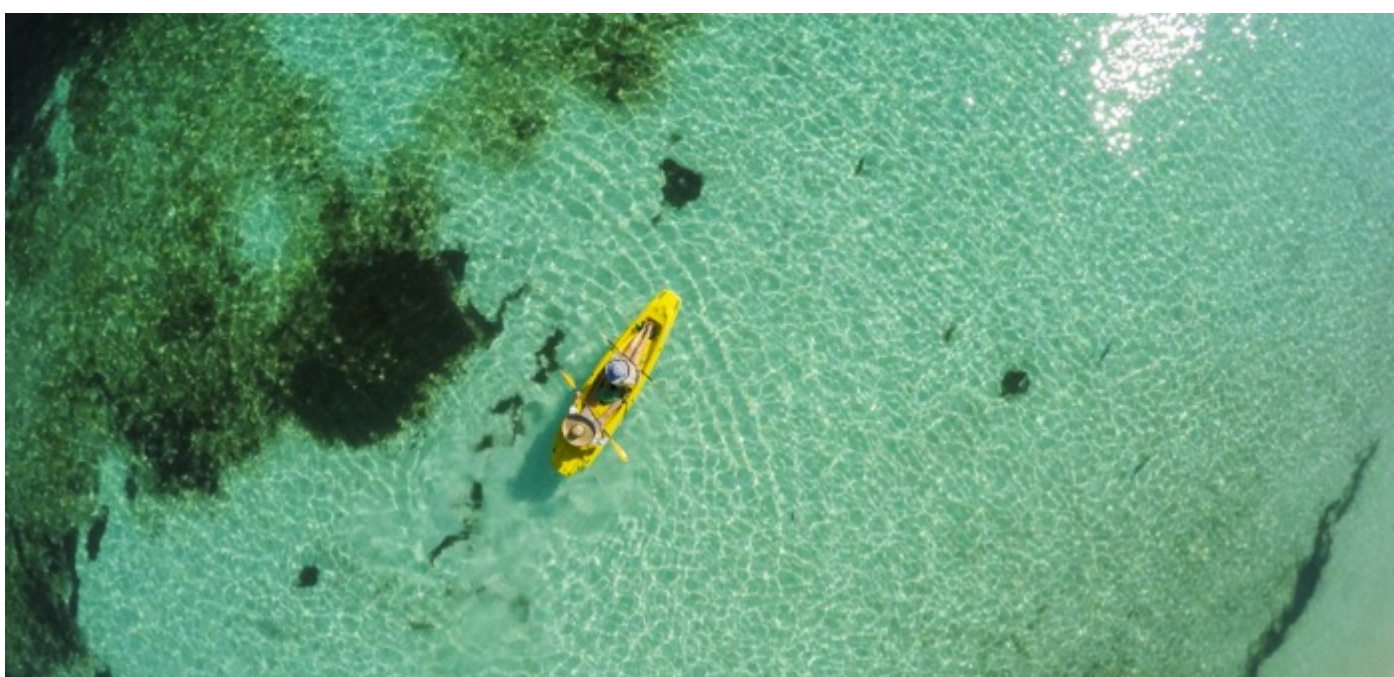
# DAY 4

## PULAU HATTA

Today we rise early to sail to Pulau Hatta which is one of the best-kept diving secrets in this region. Long white sandy beaches and the fronds of tropical palms offer stunning photo opportunities while under the waves you will find schooling fish, big pelagics and great macro life.



Snorkel, dive, fish, waterski, wakeboard or kayak and then set sail for Hatta Island to enjoy a relaxing afternoon walk on the lovely spice plantation and toast the end of another perfect day with sunset drinks and a mouth-watering feast. Afterwards maybe book an evening massage in your cabin and relax in perfect comfort.



# DAY 5

## GUNUNG API

Rise gently and take a leisurely breakfast on deck before hiking up Gunung Api for a one of the kind panoramic view of the whole of the Banda Islands. This active volcano is 666m high and sulphur clouds can be seen escaping from vents in the crust. Keep your eyes peeled as you climb the lush jungle slopes, you just might see a deer or a monkey.



This afternoon is all about 'black gold' as we visit the Spongiby Nutmeg Plantation. Here you will learn a bit about this valuable commodity, how it is grown and its significance to the region. Return to Prana for dinner onboard followed by a trip to see the latest blockbuster at the cinema under the stars.



# DAY 6

## GUNUNG API DIVING

Rise early for yoga as the sun rises or have a long lie, the choice is yours. Spend the morning exploring the lava flows under Gunung Api which reveals an incredible underwater landscape covered with hard coral that has overgrown the lava from the volcano's last eruption. Both divers and snorkels reap the rewards of this location.



Indulge in water sports, have a treatment in the salon or lie on one of the many day beds and read a book. Today is all about relaxation onboard South East Asia's most luxurious Phinisi.



## DAY 7

### BIRD ISLAND

On day 7, Prana sails to Bird Island, a steep and dramatic rocky outcrop which is home to thousands of Frigate Birds and other feathered friends. This is actually the very tip of a volcano which is submerged to a depth of 3000 meters below the Banda Sea.

Great diving and snorkelling are offered up in these nutrient-rich waters and hammerhead sharks can be famously spotted here. Dine on board telling tales of all the close encounters you have had with big fish before setting off overnight return trip to Ambon



## DAY 8

### AMBON - BACK TO REALITY

After a final breakfast onboard, bid farewell to the ship and her crew as the tenders deliver you back to port for a transfer to the airport.